

Appl. No. 10/016,411
Amdt. Dated September 22, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 23, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A disposable undergarment having longitudinally opposite end regions and transversely opposite side regions and comprising:

a liquid-impervious base sheet defining a non-skin-facing side;

a liquid-absorbent panel placed upon said base sheet sheet;

a liquid-previous topsheet placed upon said liquid-absorbent panel and defining a skin-facing side opposed to said non-skin-facing side; and

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an elastically stretchable and substantially liquid-impervious skin-facing sheet attached to said skin-facing side of said liquid-pervious topsheet so as to cover said liquid-absorbent panel,
said skin-facing sheet having:

fixed regions lying on said longitudinally opposite end regions and joined to said skin-facing side; side of said liquid-pervious topsheet;

a longitudinally middle region extending between said fixed regions and normally biased to be spaced apart upward from said liquid-absorbent panel as said undergarment is curved in a longitudinal direction thereof with the skin-facing side of said liquid-pervious topsheet inside; and

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a pair of transversely opposite side regions curving transversely inward on both sides of said longitudinally middle region so as to define a pair of leg-holes leg-holes; and at least one opening formed in said longitudinally middle region, longitudinally opposite end regions of said liquid-pervious topsheet and said skin-facing sheet being substantially coextensive in a transverse direction, a longitudinal central portion of the skin-facing sheet having a width that is smaller than a width of an underlying central portion of the liquid-pervious topsheet, and a basis weight of said skin-facing sheet being higher in said transversely opposite side regions defining the leg-holes than a basis weight of a remaining region of said skin-facing sheet and a tensile stress of said skin-facing sheet is higher than that a tensile stress of said transversely opposite side regions defining the leg-holes than in the remaining region.

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Claim 2 (currently amended): The disposable undergarment according to Claim 1, wherein a basis weight of said skin-facing sheet is higher in a peripheral edge region of said at least one opening than a basis weight of the remaining region and a tensile stress of said skin-facing sheet is higher in said peripheral edge region of said at least one opening than a basis weight tensile stress of the remaining region.

Claim 3 (previously amended): The disposable undergarment according to Claim 1, wherein a bulging line extends on said skin-facing sheet in said longitudinal direction in a vicinity of a

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longitudinal center line of said skin-facing sheet and wherein said bulging line is formed by folding and overlapping a part of said skin-facing sheet and joining said part together.

Claim 4 (previously amended): The disposable undergarment according to Claim 3, wherein said skin-facing sheet is folded back at least once along said transversely opposite side regions defining the leg-holes and said peripheral edge region of said at least one opening so as to increase the basis weight and the tensile stress of said skin-facing sheet in said transversely opposite side regions and in said peripheral edge region of said at least one opening.

B Claim 5 (currently amended): The disposable undergarment according to Claim 1, further including a pair of substantially liquid-impervious leak-barrier sheets extending in the longitudinal direction along said transversely opposite side regions of said undergarment and disposed between said base sheet and said skin-facing sheet, each of said leak-barrier sheets having longitudinally opposite fixed end regions joined to said longitudinally opposite end regions of said undergarment, a fixed bottom region joined to each of said transversely opposite side regions of said undergarment and a fixed top region joined to the surface of said skin-facing sheet opposite to each of the leak-barrier sheet sheets.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The disposable undergarment according to Claim 5, wherein said leak-barrier sheets are elastically stretchable and wherein said skin-facing sheet and said leak-barrier

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sheets are attached under tension in said longitudinal direction to said skin-facing side of said
undergarment, liquid-previous topsheet.

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Claim 7 (previously amended): The disposable undergarment according to Claim 1, wherein said transversely opposite side regions of said skin-facing sheet defining the leg-holes lie inwardly of said transversely opposite side regions of said base sheet.